

\$5.7 million which the state avoids will automatically be picked up by the counties because the counties will have their own standards. There will probably be slippage along the way, but the truth of the matter is county government will end up picking up part of the cost. Now I'm not dealing yet with my amendment. Let me deal with my amendment. What is the right thing to do? What is the right thing to do on this issue? I have concluded that the right thing to do with this issue, and I have followed this issue for ten years. In fact, I was the expert witness in the court case which held that our current statutes require the kind of coverage that LB 1127 is now attempting to avert. That is true, Senator Hefner, I was the expert witness in the court case on this issue. I followed this thing for ten years. I think that the state probably should try to avoid the cost that our current statutes require, even though that will work a hardship on poor people. On the other hand, I think it is wrong for the state to totally abdicate its responsibility to the counties. So what my amendment does is this. My amendment says there is a class of poor people that are currently not being covered by any kind of poor relief program that should be covered. And so my amendment would make certain that they are covered. And that class of poor persons are children. They are children that are living in intact families, that is, they still have a mother and a father they are living with, but the families themselves are dirt poor and those children cannot get any kind of health coverage. They can't get Medicaid coverage. Those children have a term, incidentally, they are known as Ribicoff children and the reason why they are known as Ribicoff children is because Abraham Ribicoff, a Senator from Connecticut, introduced an amendment to the Social Security Act four years ago to allow optional state coverage for the children of poor, intact families who could not get health services. My amendment very simply would provide Medicaid coverage for our poor children in this state who are living in intact families, where there is a mom and a dad present. If the families are dirt poor and the children can't get medical services, then I would take advantage of the Ribicoff Medicaid program. Illinois recently went into that at ultimately a great cost saving to the counties and the General Assistance Program. Iowa has gone into that.